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PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
FOR
U.S. IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE
AND
JOINT TASK FORCE SIX
SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT (PEIS)
NOVEMBER 3, 1998
LAREDO, TEXAS

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1 S P E A K E R S

2

RON RUFFENNACH, Master of Ceremonies

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GEORGE GUNNOE, Asst. Chief, Laredo Sector
Border Patrol

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JOHN ESQUIVEL, Asst. Chief, Headquarters
Border Patrol

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LT. COLONEL MICHAEL ROSSI, JTF-6 Engineer

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CHRIS INGRAM, CONTRACTOR

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 MR. RUFFENNACH: Good morning, ladies
4 and gentlemen. Thank you very much for coming
5 this evening.

6 Now, this is a Public Scoping Meeting on
7 the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact
8 Statement or PEIS for Joint Task Force Six and
9 Immigration & Naturalization Service missions
10 primarily along the southwest border. My name
11 is Ron Ruffennach, and I will be moderating
12 this evening's meeting.

13 Before a decision is made to implement any
14 programs and accompanying strategies, JTF-6 and
15 INS must do a complete analysis of them. This
16 type of broad analysis is referred to as a
17 Programmatic EIS rather than the more commonly
18 known EIS which analyzes the specific project
19 followed by the government.

20 Part of the process involves receiving
21 public input during the early phase of the
22 PEIS; this is called scoping. At scoping
23 meetings, we ask for public input on the scope
24 or range of issues that should be considered

25 for analysis. Comments received during scoping

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1 are addressed during the development of the
2 PEIS document. I'd like to note that this is
3 the ninth meeting that's been held over the
4 last several weeks. There is a total of ten
5 meetings. The last one scheduled for this week
6 in Del Rio. These meetings have been held all
7 along the border from here to San Diego.

8 We have two goals tonight, to provide
9 information about JTF-6 and INS activities and
10 to receive your comments for consideration in
11 the PEIS.

12 My role this evening is to make sure that
13 we have an orderly meeting and that everyone
14 that wishes to speak has an opportunity to do
15 so.

16 You can comment this evening in a number
17 of different ways. You can provide us your
18 handwritten comments and you can give those to
19 us at the end of the meeting. We will have a
20 comment period of five minutes per speaker
21 following our presentations or you may talk
22 directly to the court reporter following our
23 meeting, if you'd like. The comments will

24 be -- Again, this is not a question and answer
25 exchange during this part of the meeting. Each

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1 of the nine meetings -- or, excuse me, all ten
2 meetings are being conducted using the exact
3 same format which means that we have been
4 providing comment to folks and limiting those
5 comments to five minutes.

6 Was have three presentations this
7 evening. Again, as I said, from JTF-6 and also
8 from the Border Patrol. And some of them will
9 talk about the NEPA process, the National
10 Environmental Policy Act process.

11 First, it's my pleasure to introduce
12 George Gunnoe, who is the Assistant Chief here
13 is the Laredo Sector for the Border Patrol.

14 George.

15 MR. GUNNOE: I also welcome you and
16 thank you very much for attending. This is a
17 very important part of what the Immigration &
18 Naturalization Service and Boarder Patrol does
19 along the southwest border.

20 For background information, this is the
21 second PEIS that -- first one will be back in
22 1993, '94, and we use that as a base line for

23 all our projects along the southwest border in
24 conjunction with Joint Task Force Six.

25 For a little bit of informational

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1 purposes, the Laredo Sector and the U.S. Border
2 Patrol covers 187 miles of international
3 boundary. All of this is located along the
4 river from the Falcon dam area up to the Dimmit
5 County, Maverick County Line, approximately 80
6 miles up river from where we sit today.

7 Oftentimes the Border Patrol in this area
8 seeks the assistance of Joint Task Force Six.
9 A lot of this assistance is in operational mode
10 such as what we used to call listening
11 postobservation post and also intelligence
12 analysis support, engineering support, airborne
13 flare missions and things of that nature.

14 But anything that needs to be done along
15 the southwest border that has an impact on the
16 environment has to go through this process of
17 environmental impact study or environmental
18 assessment.

19 This PEIS will establish a base line for
20 the next five years if we should have the need
21 or we request the JTF-6 support or any type of

22 DOD support, be it Title 32 which is National
23 Guard Support, or Title 10 which is Active Duty
24 Support, we have to comply. We as a federal
25 agency have to comply with outstanding laws,

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1 rules, regulations, the executive orders, NEPA,
2 EPA, DEPA. We can go through a full list of
3 acronyms that we have to adhere to. But your
4 input is extremely important to us. We need to
5 take that into account before we conduct any
6 operation on the southwest border. Anything
7 that can impact on the environment, on the
8 community, things of this nature will become a
9 part of this report. And, again, it will be
10 used as a base line report.

11 Last year, for historical purposes and
12 informational purposes, the Laredo Sector
13 apprehended 104,000 illegal aliens in this
14 sector. 70,000 of those came from this area
15 here that you see out your window. Out of
16 those 70,000, 1 percent, almost 7,000, came
17 through this downtown area. That road that
18 we've had built before was instrumental in
19 deterring quite a bit of that traffic. We
20 point that 70 percent of our illegal alien

21 traffic moved 30 to 50 miles up river.

22 Our narcotics apprehension in this area
23 dropped down to zero as opposed to previous
24 years where we had multiple seizures out here,
25 hundreds of pounds of marijuana and cocaine.

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1 Bandit activity in this area that you see
2 out here went down to zero. We've had no
3 bandit activity. We've had a 90 percent
4 decrease in crime in the neighborhoods
5 immediately bordering from this port of entry
6 out to my right all the way up to the CP&L
7 Power Plant up above. Thanks to our Florida
8 employed agents, all of these improvements that
9 have been made have contributed significantly
10 to our effort to control immigration in this
11 area. To the present day, we control 11 miles
12 of border, from this port of entry here, port
13 of entry number one, all the way up through the
14 Rancho Viejo area.

15 In the future, we intend on putting up
16 cameras to supplement and augment our agent
17 levels out here. These cameras, before they
18 can be placed, have to go through the
19 environmental impact studies, environmental

20 assessments, things of this nature. So again,
21 this PEIS is a base line that will allow us to
22 do the -- those technological enhancements that
23 we need to maintain control of this border.

24 I urge you to be candid in your comments,
25 be forthcoming, and again, I welcome all of

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1 you. The majority of you are from out of
2 town. I welcome all of you to the Laredo
3 Sector of the Border Patrol and look forward to
4 hearing some of your comments. Thank you.

5 I'll be followed by Mr. John Esquivel,
6 Deputy Chief Patrol Agent from the -- I guess
7 you changed your title. Now they're Assistant
8 Chief Patrol Agents that are headquartered
9 Border Patrol in Washington, D.C. When I was
10 there, we were deputy chiefs.

11 MR. ESQUIVEL: I thought I had been
12 promoted. When you told me, I was getting
13 ready to celebrate.

14 Good evening. I'm John Esquivel.
15 Assistant Chief out of Headquarters in
16 Washington, D.C.

17 This evening I will give you a brief
18 history of the United States Border Patrol, our

19 mission, our operations, and our national
20 strategy.

21 The Border Patrol was first organized by
22 the admission of the general of immigration in
23 1904, and we were known as Border Guards, not
24 as Border Patrol agents. In 1924 the Bureau of
25 Immigration established the United States

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1 Border Patrol. Next year we're very proud to
2 celebrate our 75th anniversary.

3 Originally, we were a part of The
4 Department of Labor. And since 1940, we have
5 become a part of the Department of Justice and
6 our parent agency is the Immigration &
7 Naturalization Service.

8 We have 21 sectors in the United States
9 and one in Ramey, Puerto Rico, of which nine
10 are located on the southwest border going from
11 Brownsville, Texas, to San Diego, California.

12 The commission of the U.S. Border Patrol
13 is to secure the external boundaries of the
14 United States between the ports of entry by
15 preventing or deterring illegal entry and
16 deterring and interdicting and apprehending
17 undocumented entrance, smugglers, narcotics,

18 contrabands and violators of other laws. We
19 are designated as a lead agency responsible for
20 narcotics apprehensions between the ports of
21 entry.

22 Our operations include traditional line
23 watch and sign cutting, traffic check points,
24 transportation check, air operations, marine
25 patrol ports and bike patrol, and our canine

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1 program.

2 The national strategy which -- strange
3 significance since 1993, it is now prevention
4 through deterrence instead of the -- what's
5 most referred to, the cat and mouse game, now
6 we station agents on the line itself and deter
7 the illegal entry of aliens. And it's a
8 multi-air approach, but we intend to gain,
9 maintain, and extent control of the
10 international boundary.

11 We have four operations currently in
12 existence. The first one which began in 1993,
13 in El Paso, Texas, known as Operation Hold the
14 Line. That was followed by Operation
15 Gatekeeper in San Diego of El Centro Yuma.
16 Operation Safeguard in Tucson Sector, and

17 Operation Rio Grande which began in McAllen
18 Sector and extends to -- from McAllen, Laredo,
19 Del Rio, and Marfa Sectors.

20 From September 30th -- excuse me, October
21 1st of last year to September 30th of this year
22 along the southwest border, along the nine
23 sectors that I mentioned earlier, the Border
24 Patrol apprehended 1,516,679 aliens of which
25 the Laredo Sector was responsible for 103,433

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1 aliens.

2 I'm going to have to move this because I
3 can't see the information there.

4 Fiscal year 1998 up until June of 1998
5 Laredo Sector has approximately 581 agents
6 assigned to it, and I believe that number has
7 increased since then and will continue to
8 increase this fiscal year which began October
9 1st.

10 As I mentioned earlier, we are designated
11 the primary agency responsible for narcotics
12 apprehension. In fiscal year 1997, the Border
13 Patrol was responsible for 52 percent of all
14 narcotics seized by all federal agencies
15 combines. Laredo, Texas -- excuse me, Laredo

16 Sector of fiscal year 1988, was responsible for
17 1,088 narcotics apprehensions, and it's the
18 sector of which 84,245 pounds of marijuana were
19 seized, 4,803 pounds of cocaine for a total
20 street value of \$248,739,824. Laredo was one
21 of the busiest sectors with narcotics
22 apprehensions along the McAllen Sector.
23 Nationwide the Border Patrol seized 22,675
24 pounds of cocaine and 871,417 pounds of
25 marijuana.

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1 I want to highlight some particular
2 procedures that have occurred not only in
3 Laredo but also in other areas along the
4 southwest border and I mention they're
5 significant but they're not unusual. This
6 happens every day along the southwest border.
7 One, on July 13th where agents in Brownsville
8 seized 2,501 pounds of marijuana with a street
9 value of \$2,000,800. Agents here in Laredo
10 seized 2,534 pounds of marijuana with a street
11 value of \$2,027,200 and agents in Rio Grande
12 City seized 1,674 pounds of marijuana with a
13 street value of \$1,339,000.

14 In August of this year, agents -- and

15 Customs agents in El Paso, Texas, seized 1,705
16 pounds of marijuana and 35 pounds of
17 methamphetamine for a street value of 1,364,000
18 and 1,120,000 respectfully.

19 On August 8th, agents here in Laredo
20 seized 500 pounds of cocaine with a street
21 value of \$16,016,000, and in August 10th,
22 agents in Tucson seized 1,214 pounds of
23 marijuana with a street value of \$971,880.

24 As you can see, we're very, very busy with
25 both alien apprehensions and narcotics

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1 apprehensions. A lot of our success we can
2 attribute to our strategy, our current strategy
3 that we have deployed along the southwest
4 border and the assistance we have received from
5 the Joint Task Force Six with the directing
6 infrastructure that has helped us to better
7 maintain control of the border.

8 We look forward to working with JTF-6 in
9 our partnership which has saved the Immigration
10 & Naturalization Service millions of dollars,
11 and most importantly, the American taxpayer.

12 That concludes my presentation. I would
13 like to present Lieutenant Colonel Rossi from

14 Joint Task Force Six.

15 LIEUTENANT ROSSI: Good evening. My
16 name is Lieutenant Colonel Mike Rossi. I'm the
17 Staff Engineer for Joint Task Force Six. The
18 purpose of my speaking to you tonight is to
19 give you an overview of Joint Task Force Six.

20 Joint Task Force Six is a role in the
21 nation's conquer of the fight. By the end of
22 this presentation, I'll hope you'll have a
23 better understanding of our organization, our
24 mission, and how we support the various
25 federal, state, and local law enforcement

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1 agencies in stemming and stopping the flow of
2 drugs in our neighborhoods.

3 Well, this is the sequence of my brief.
4 I'm going to start with the national drug
5 control strategy and the goals put forth by the
6 president, and then I'll explain the
7 involvement of The Department of Defense and
8 Joint Task Force Six in fighting drugs. I'll
9 present Joint Task Force Six's mission, and
10 then I'll outline Joint Task Force Six and
11 DOD's unique relationship to the Border Patrol
12 and other law enforcement agencies and every

13 type of role -- in every type of role of
14 support we provide these agencies.

15 Well, this is -- these annual statistics
16 provide you an overview of the national drug
17 problem. The legal drug use is responsible for
18 a significant amount of criminal activity in the
19 United States. It also poses a serious public
20 safety and public health problem for our
21 governmental agencies. An estimated 83 billion
22 dollars a year is spent by the government to
23 address drug-related problems. 67 billion
24 dollars goes towards social programs such as
25 treatment and education while the balance of

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1 that 83 billion dollars, 16 billion, is spent
2 on law enforcement efforts each year.

3 Well, what follows from those statistics
4 is the negative impact of drugs on the United
5 States and our communities. Drugs impact the
6 productivity of our work force. They destruct
7 the educational system in our country. They
8 have significant impact on our law and order in
9 our communities. They adversely affect our
10 families, and they place a burden on our health
11 control system or on our health care system.

12 To address these issues, the office of
13 drug control policy working at the direction of
14 the President formulated and published an
15 national drug control strategy. This strategy
16 defines our national plan to combat and treat
17 drug use. It also sets goals and objectives by
18 which we can measure the success of our
19 efforts.

20 These are the goals laid out in the
21 strategy published in 1998, in February of
22 1998. The Department of Defense and Joint Task
23 Force Six contribute to the obtainment of these
24 goals in three particular areas, to provide
25 support to law enforcement efforts to reduce

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1 drug-related crime and violence. We help
2 shield America's lands scene and air frontiers,
3 and we aid in breaking foreign domestic sources
4 of supply. The national objective is to reduce
5 drug use and availability in the United States
6 by 50 percent by the year 2007.

7 Joint Task Force Six is The Department of
8 Defense Task Force established in 1989 to
9 support law enforcement agencies on the
10 southwest border. Since 1989 our

11 responsibilities have grown to include the
12 entire continental of the United States. The
13 main focus of our support, however, remains the
14 four southwest border states of California,
15 Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, where 80
16 percent of our missions occur.

17 Our most recent mission statement approved
18 earlier this year reads Joint Task Force Six
19 synchronizes and integrates Department of
20 Defense operational, technological, training
21 and intelligence support to drug law
22 enforcement agency's counter-drug efforts in
23 the continental of the United States in order
24 to reduce the availability of illegal drugs in
25 the continental of the United States.

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1 Well, Joint Task Force Six wasn't created
2 in the minds of the defense agency or in the
3 minds of the law enforcement agency. It was
4 created by Congress. This slide shows you the
5 specific legislation by which Congress
6 established Joint Task Force Six. They also
7 provide legal constraints under which we
8 operate. In summary they authorize The
9 Department of Defense to conduct training

10 exercises in drug interdiction areas, to
11 provide support to the counter-drug effort, and
12 to assist with the detection and monitoring of
13 cross-border smuggling activities.

14 These are the restrictions under which we
15 operation, and I'm going to walk you down this
16 slide pretty exhaustively and slowly so you
17 understand that it's not free rain out there.
18 We operate under a tight set of rules.

19 First of all, a written request has to be
20 provided by the requesting law enforcement
21 agency, and in that written request, there has
22 to be a clearly articulated counter-drug nexus
23 or leakage. Drugs have to be involved. All
24 Joint Task Force activities must comply with
25 the Posse Commitatus Act which prohibits the

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1 use of military forces for domestic police
2 functions. We may not violate the sanctity of
3 the United States/Mexico border. We must
4 follow rules of engagements which only allow
5 the use of force in self-defense. Currently no
6 Joint Task Force Six operations are authorized
7 to carry weapons. All security is provided by
8 the support of law enforcement agencies.

8 the counter-drug nexus and provide us with our
9 working priorities.

10 Joint Task Force Six then conducts its own
11 independent legal review, and once the mission
12 is approved by our commander and our command
13 group, we solicit for volunteer units. These
14 volunteer units sign up for the training
15 benefit they receive which closely matches the
16 specific skills they require for their war time
17 mission. As an example, I will give you a road
18 mission. What we would ask an engineer unit to
19 do if we were to send them overseas, one of
20 their missions would be to conduct a road or to
21 construct a road. They, for the last 40, 50
22 years in the post World War II era have
23 constructed about all the roads you can
24 construct on Fort Campbell and Fort Lewis and
25 Fort Hood, and in order to be good at their

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1 skills and learn their jobs, these soldiers
2 need to practice doing their craft, which is
3 constructing roads. The Border Patrol will
4 come to us and say, "We have a requirement for
5 a road," for many reasons. Our agent's safety,
6 reaction to combat force; they have a lot of

7 reasons to ask for a road. And they would come
8 back and say, "Do you have an engineer unit
9 that needs to train on building a road?" And I
10 would find a volunteer unit. I will say I will
11 deploy this unit to some place and time in the
12 United States and build a road for the Border
13 Patrol on the behalf of Joint Task Force Six.
14 In this case, we create a win-win train unit
15 and a Border Patrol with enhanced
16 capabilities.

17 The mission is planned, briefed, and
18 approved by Joint Task Force Six and the law
19 enforcement agency and formal orders are issued
20 to begin the mission. After each operation, we
21 conduct an after action review with the law
22 enforcement agency, with Joint Task Force Six,
23 and the supporting unit in order to capture all
24 the lessons learned.

25 Again, I'll walk you down this slide

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1 fairly exhaustively so you'll understand the
2 kinds of operational missions the Joint Task
3 Force Six performs. Ground observation recon
4 is using military forces to watch smuggling
5 routes or patrol remote areas to locate

6 marijuana plots or narcotic labs. As you can
7 see, this is shown in red on the slide, and
8 these missions are currently suspended. Aerial
9 observation is using Department of Defense
10 aircraft to spot drug growing areas or labs and
11 to monitor smuggling corridors. Pilots pass
12 all information and activity immediately to the
13 LEAs or law enforcement agents for action.
14 Sensor missions involve monitoring smuggling
15 corridors to detect and report activities to
16 the law enforcement agencies. These are also
17 currently suspended, as you can see in red.

18 The first three missions you see are
19 basically the same mission which is monitoring
20 areas for drug activities. It's just the
21 platform is different. In the first platform,
22 you have soldiers or boots on the ground. On
23 the second bullet there, you have aerial
24 observation which is an aircraft in the air
25 that does the observation. In the last -- in

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1 the third of the bullets, the ground sensors is
2 where you place the electronic sensor to
3 conduct the surveillance using electronic
4 means. All of which have the purpose of

5 reporting to the law enforcement agency who has
6 the legal authority to make the arrest or to
7 conduct the investigation.

8 We also provide medical evacuation support
9 and transportation of supplies and equipment.

10 On the last bullet, control delivery, I
11 can best describe it by an example. As an
12 example, let's say that the Border Patrol makes
13 an arrest at the check point outside of town
14 here on I-35, and they were to seize a number
15 of drugs. And through their investigation,
16 they find out that this drug load is destined
17 for the Chicago area. What Joint Task Force
18 Six would do as the law enforcement agency, the
19 Border Patrol would say, "Look, we need your
20 help to transport the vehicle and the drugs to
21 Chicago so it can make its appointed place and
22 time for the pick up and that way there we can
23 break the entire drug ring or expand the
24 capture of the drugs." What Joint Task Force
25 Six does is we use military assets to transport

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1 the vehicle and the drugs. They make their
2 point at the time and place, and then the law
3 enforcement agency is able to close the loop on

4 the bust. We provide them with the
5 transportation to move the vehicles and the
6 drug loads, and we do not get involved in the
7 chain of custody. That is done by the law
8 enforcement agency.

9 A wide range of assessment services to
10 include project design surveys, cost
11 estimating, environmental assessments, and
12 master planning infrastructure are one part of
13 the engineering missions we conduct. Our
14 primary construction missions are border roads,
15 fences, and lights between the U.S. ports of
16 entry all along the southwest border. Training
17 and operational facilities such as small arms
18 ranges, vehicle maintenance facilities,
19 aviation support facilities, border patrol
20 check points, and other structures are also
21 some of the missions we use throughout the
22 continental of the United States.

23 Mobile training teams are small groups of
24 subject matter experts requested by law
25 enforcement to provide classroom and practical

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1 instruction. We provide 150 training teams per
2 year in such areas as medical, fire arms,

3 intelligence, language, and planning
4 techniques. Specialized training is
5 coordinated by Joint Task Force Six but
6 provided by the United States Army Military
7 Police school. Examples of this include
8 tactical police operations and special reaction
9 team techniques. We also participate in
10 technology sharing efforts with law enforcement
11 agencies. Some examples are sensors, night
12 vision, experimentation of devices and tunnel
13 detection technologies.

14 Well, I hope my briefing has shown you
15 that Joint Task Force Six is a dedicated
16 organization composed of all four services.
17 We're committed to the service of our nation,
18 and we're also committed to supporting our law
19 enforcement agents in the counter-drug effort.

20 This concludes my formal briefing, and
21 I'll be followed by Mr. Chris Ingram who will
22 discuss processes we'll follow under the
23 National Environmental Policy Act. Thank you.

24 MR. INGRAM: Thank you, Colonel
25 Rossi. As Colonel Rossi mentioned, my role

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1 tonight is to discuss the National

2 Environmental Policy Act or NEPA as it's
3 commonly called, which was first passed by
4 Congress in 1969. The purpose of NEPA is to
5 provide full public disclosure of any action a
6 federal agency is proposing to undertake. It
7 also provides the public an opportunity to
8 participate in the decision-making process, and
9 it also provides the decision-makers with the
10 objective and accurate information so that they
11 can make a better informed decision.

12 NEPA requires that any federal agency
13 prior to undertaking an action that -- or
14 before they commit significant resources to
15 that activity that they prepare a NEPA
16 document. There's generally three levels of
17 NEPA documents. First is a categorical
18 exclusion which is used for very minor
19 projects. Next is environmental assessment, a
20 little more detail. And the third, as in this
21 case, is an environmental impact statement.
22 NEPA and presence counsel, environmental
23 clause, that requires that whenever an EIS is
24 performed that scoping is performed and, of
25 course, that's mainly why we're here tonight.

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1 The NEPA process is illustrated here.
2 Again the federal agency first identifies a
3 need or a problem that they may have and they
4 also formulate alternatives that will solve
5 that problem or satisfy that need. And if, as
6 in this case, an EIS is being prepared, they
7 have to publish a Notice of Intent to prepare
8 the EIS in the Federal Register. The Notice of
9 Intent for this EIS was published in the
10 Federal Register on August 28th, which
11 initiated the public scoping process. We're
12 gathering public comments through these scoping
13 meetings, and we'll continue to gather them all
14 the way up to December 16th, as Ron mentioned
15 earlier, and we'll incorporate those comments
16 into a draft document which will be released to
17 the public for review and comment. We'll
18 receive your comments again on that document,
19 and then we'll revise it, the document, and
20 then publish the final EIS, which will be
21 released again for public view and comment for
22 a minimum of 30 days that time. And then
23 finally we'll publish the record decision.
24 All these documents have numerous federal
25 and state statutes, regulations, laws,

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1 executive orders they have to comply with, not
2 the lease which, of course, is NEPA. The other
3 ones are Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act,
4 the Preservation Act, on and on and on.

5 The way INS and JTF-6 are complying with
6 NEPA and all these other statutes currently, as
7 George mentioned previously, INS and JTF-6
8 published a Programmatic EIS in 1994, which
9 covered their program for the entire
10 southwestern states. Since then they have been
11 preparing site project specific EAs that have
12 adhered to that document. Most of those have
13 required that cultural and biological resource
14 surveys be conducted prior to the action being
15 undertaken and as part of their environment
16 assessment. And then for many of them,
17 particularly the engineering or construction
18 activities, they have required that on-site
19 biological and archeological monitors be there
20 during the construction so that they can assure
21 that no impacts occur to significant
22 resources.

23 However, the '94 document covered a
24 five-year period. That five-year period is
25 coming to a close late '99, and so INS and

1 JTF-6 have elected to supplement or update that
2 document.

3 The supplemental Programmatic EIS will be
4 formulated very similar to the '94 document in
5 that it will have all the base line or existing
6 conditions presented in five separate technical
7 support documents covering these areas that
8 have shown on the slide; however, the
9 Programmatic EIS will be able to address INS
10 and JTF-6 activities throughout the U.S.
11 Although, we're going to focus on a 50-mile
12 corridor along the four southwestern states
13 because, as Colonel Rossi mentioned, that's
14 where the vast majority of their activities
15 occur.

16 So the goals of the Programmatic EIS is to
17 identify the types of actions that this INS and
18 JTF-6 expect for the next five years. We'll
19 describe in generic terms the impacts that are
20 associated with each of those types of
21 projects, and we'll compare and discuss
22 accumulative impacts. We're going to look back
23 at what we've projected from '94 to '99, see
24 how well we did in making those projections,
25 use that data to project out what's going to

1 happen over the next five years.

2 Some of the benefits of the Programmatic
3 EIS is, once again, a full public disclosure of
4 what to expect to happen over the next five
5 years. It will eliminate some repetitive
6 discussions through the tiering process, saving
7 taxpayers' time and cost. It will provide an
8 accurate assessment and other cumulative
9 impacts in that we're going to go back and look
10 at what has happened compared with what we
11 projected would happen, and then we can get a
12 better idea of what the anticipating impact is
13 going to be for the next five years. And just
14 as important, it provides the resource agencies
15 with a lot of data, a lot of coordination that
16 they would not have had if these other site
17 specific or project specific EAs and
18 Programmatic EIS could not have been prepared.

19 Need to emphasize, though, that this
20 Programmatic EIS will not allow INS, JTF-6,
21 Border Patrol, Customs, anyone else to conduct
22 a project without proper compliance with NEPA,
23 the National Historic Preservations Act,
24 Endangered Species Act, and any other
25 applicable federal or state statute or

1 regulation. They will have to continue to do
2 their own site specific or project specific
3 NEPA documents.

4 This is our schedule, and we intend to go
5 by it. As I mentioned, the Notice of Intent
6 was published in the Federal Register on August
7 28th. We started the scoping process. As Ron
8 mentioned, this is the ninth out of ten public
9 scoping meetings we've conducted. We will be
10 accepting your comments all the way up to
11 December 16th. We intend to have a draft ready
12 for public review in February of '99. Will be
13 released -- forwarded to you for a minimum of
14 45 days. Then we'll incorporate your comments
15 and hope to have a final EIS out September '99
16 and follow it up with a record decision by
17 November
18 '99.

19 That concludes my presentation tonight.
20 I'm going to turn the podium back over to Ron
21 Ruffennach who will give you the ground rules
22 on making comments tonight. Thank you very
23 much.

24 MR. RUFFENNACH: It's usually at this
25 point in the meeting that we would ask for

1 public comment; we will do that. However, we
2 asked for folks to register as they came in and
3 indicate whether or not they did want to
4 speak. At this point in time, I have -- no one
5 has indicated to speak this evening. At least,
6 I have not been given any cards.

7 Would you check --

8 No one's indicated that they wanted to
9 speak. I will point out, however, that the
10 meeting is being recorded this evening. As you
11 can see, we have a court reporter. Your
12 comments that are made during this meeting do
13 become a part of the permanent record and are
14 included in the PEIS; however, you can also, as
15 you heard a couple of times said this evening,
16 you can make your written comments to the
17 address provided on the handout that was given
18 to you. Those comments can be mailed, in great
19 detail, to that address as long as they're
20 received by December 16th. We'll be taking
21 public comment through December 16th of this
22 year.

23 I will ask as a courtesy, if there is
24 anyone who has a comment that they would like

25 to make, they may do so now. We do not have a

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1 floor mike, but I think the room is small
2 enough that if someone wanted to make a
3 comment, they could be heard.

4 I'll ask that you please --

5 MR. VAUGHAN: Yeah. My name is Tom
6 Vaughan and --

7 MR. RUFFENNACH: Sir, just one
8 moment. You're going to have to sustain your
9 level of deliver so the court reporter can
10 hear, okay?

11 MR. VAUGHAN: Sure.

12 MR. RUFFENNACH: Thank you.

13 MR. VAUGHAN: Yeah. My name is Tom
14 Vaughan, and the only comment I would like to
15 make is, I attended one of these scoping
16 meetings, the last one that was held in Laredo,
17 I suppose. It was about 1994. I think, 1994.
18 And at that point in time, I had no idea what
19 was actually being discussed. I think you guys
20 did a whole lot better job of making the
21 presentation tonight, but I still have no idea
22 what your plans are for the next five years,
23 you know, so how can you ask us to make a

24 comment that makes any sense without us knowing
25 what we're commenting on? That's my comment.

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1 MR. RUFFENNACH: Thank you, sir.

2 Anyone else.

3 MR. EARHART: My name is Jim Earhart,
4 and I would reiterate what my friend, Tom
5 Vaughan, just said.

6 MR. RUFFENNACH: Thank you, sir.

7 Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. GOTTSCHALK: I would certainly
9 reiterate the same, and is there any
10 opportunity for questions?

11 MR. RUFFENNACH: Following the formal
12 meeting, yes, ma'am, there is.

13 MS. GOTTSCHALK: But during this,
14 there is no --

15 MR. RUFFENNACH: That's correct.

16 MS. GOTTSCHALK: -- opportunity for
17 questioning? Even on the material that has
18 been presented?

19 MR. RUFFENNACH: That's correct.

20 MR. GOTTSCHALK: Thank you.

21 Why are we here?

22 MR. RUFFENNACH: I think we stated

23 the purpose of the meeting up front, was to
24 take public comment on things to be considered
25 in a Programmatic Environmental Impact

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1 Statement that's being prepared for Joint Task
2 Force Six and INS activities.

3 With no further comments from the -- from
4 the audience, I will close this meeting. There
5 are a number of people here from Joint Task
6 Force Six and from the Border Patrol. I
7 encourage you to spend time talking with them
8 and clarify information or -- or ask your
9 questions of them.

10 If you want to then further state your
11 comments to the court reporter, I've asked that
12 she stay for a few more minutes so that they
13 become a part of the permanent record. Or
14 again, please provide your comments to us by
15 December 16th.

16 Thank you very much for coming.

17 (Meeting concluded.)

18

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22 STATE OF TEXAS)

23 COUNTY OF WEBB)

24

25 This is to certify that I,

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3 reported in shorthand the proceedings conducted
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5 foregoing 35 pages contain a full, true and
6 correct transcript of said proceedings.

7 WITNESS MY HAND, this the
8 day of , A.D. 1998.

9
10 Cert. No. 4721

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